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BUSINESS IN NEBRASKA

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NEBRASKA RETAIL SALES, 1982-1983

Nebraska's 1983 net taxable retail sales amounted to $9,189 million, up $25 million from the 1982 total of $9,164 million (Table 2, page 2). On an actual dollar basis, this growth represented an increase of 0.3 percent in 1983, a slight improvement from 1982's loss of 3.2 percent.

To compensate for price changes that occurred, the dollar volume of taxable retail sales was adjusted by the commodity component of the consumer price index. This index increased by 2.9 percent, resulting in a price-adjusted or real change in sales of –2.6 percent. This compares to a 1982 decline of 6.9 percent.

The net taxable sales figures presented in this article were derived from general sales tax figures compiled by the Nebraska Department of Revenue. The sales tax applies to most retail sales and is complemented with a general use tax. Beginning in October 1983, however, the tax base was altered considerably when food items for home consumption were exempted from the sales tax. Although no precise measure of this impact has been made, it is estimated that taxable nonmotor vehicle sales were reduced approximately 13.0 percent at the state level. Obviously, this number would vary from county to county, as large counties with a more diversified sales base would be affected less than smaller counties.

Keeping this in mind, it is possible to make a simple adjustment to the 1982–1983 percent changes by adding 3.4 to the percent changes and 3.3 to the price-adjusted percent changes in Table 1. If the tax base had been the same in 1982 and 1983, the state's total nonmotor vehicle sales would have increased approximately 1.9 percent and would have been down 1.0 percent on a price-adjusted basis.

Similarly, 3.2 and 3.1 can be added to the respective values in Table 2. From this, it can be seen that change in the state's total net taxable sales would be increased from 0.3 percent to 3.5 percent, and from a 2.6 percent price-adjusted decline to a 0.5 percent growth. It is important to remember, however, that these adjustments are for illustrative purposes only, as there is no way of knowing the actual adjustments.

The geographic distribution of net taxable retail sales by planning region and county, with the respective changes that

(continued on page 3)

Table 1
Net Taxable Retail Sales[1] In Selected Nebraska Trading Centers
1982 and 1983

Trading Center	1982 ($000)	1983 ($000)	Percent Change	Price Adjusted Percent Change[2]	Trading Center	1982 ($000)	1983 ($000)	Percent Change	Price Adjusted Percent Change[2]
Alliance	63,643	63,547	-0.2	-3.1	McCook	85,036	80,306	-5.6	-8.3
Beatrice	86,730	85,013	-2.0	-4.8	Nebraska City	46,514	44,364	-4.6	-7.3
Bellevue	103,379	111,212	7.6	4.5	Norfolk	173,161	172,529	-0.4	-3.3
Blair	44,926	41,350	-8.0	-10.6	North Platte	174,945	170,433	-2.6	-5.4
Broken Bow	40,233	38,840	-3.5	-6.3	Ogallala	53,263	51,377	-3.5	-6.3
Chadron	34,572	33,650	-2.7	-5.5	Omaha	2,455,601	2,562,833	4.4	1.4
Columbus	148,866	144,261	-3.1	-5.9	O'Neill	45,031	42,732	-5.1	-7.8
Fairbury	36,278	36,127	-0.4	-3.3	Scottsbluff/Gering	189,069	183,212	-3.1	-5.9
Falls City	32,070	30,442	-5.1	-7.8	Seward	40,737	37,435	-8.1	-10.7
Fremont	155,161	154,160	-0.6	-3.4	Sidney	42,858	41,163	-4.0	-6.8
Grand Island	337,950	334,622	-1.0	-3.8	South Sioux City	37,214	37,424	0.6	-2.3
Hartington	18,813	17,109	-9.1	-11.7	Wayne	35,388	33,341	-5.8	-8.5
Hastings	159,175	159,174	0.0	-2.9	West Point	30,836	30,059	-2.5	-5.3
Holdrege	61,259	54,008	-11.8	-14.3	York	73,398	69,751	-5.0	-7.7
Kearney	174,749	172,917	-1.0	-3.8					
Kimball	33,033	28,498	-13.7	-16.2	Total 32 Centers	6,066,790	6,154,082	1.4	-1.5
Lexington	61,668	60,324	-2.2	-5.0					
Lincoln	991,234	1,031,869	4.1	1.1	TOTAL STATE[3]	8,317,986	8,190,373	-1.5	-4.3

[1]Excluding motor vehicle sales, and in October, November, and December 1983, also excluding food sales.
[2]Current dollar sales adjusted (deflated) for price changes using commodity prices component of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index.
[3]Total state sales include some sales that cannot be allocated to cities, counties, or regions.
Source: Compilations by Bureau of Business Research from special tabulations provided by Nebraska Tax Commissioner.

Table 2
Net Taxable Retail Sales[1] Of Nebraska's Planning and Development Regions and Counties, 1982 and 1983

Region and County	1982 ($000)	1983 ($000)	Percent Change	Price Adjusted Percent Change[2]
Region 1	3,006,075	3,185,311	6.0	2.9
Douglas	2,719,731	2,883,349	6.0	3.0
Sarpy	224,651	242,120	7.8	4.7
Washington	61,693	59,842	-3.0	-5.8
Region 2	1,100,515	1,160,529	5.5	2.4
Lancaster	1,100,515	1,160,529	5.5	2.4
Region 3	56,247	58,154	3.4	0.4
Dakota	56,247	58,154	3.4	0.4
Region 4	192,801	186,894	-3.1	-5.8
Cass	58,728	57,936	-1.3	-4.1
Otoe	73,558	70,762	-3.8	-6.6
Saunders	60,515	58,196	-3.8	-6.6
Region 6	309,946	304,621	-1.7	-4.5
Burt	36,658	35,710	-2.6	-5.4
Cuming	57,382	55,219	-3.8	-6.6
Dodge	202,139	200,442	-0.8	-3.5
Thurston	13,767	13,250	-3.8	-6.6
Region 7	110,898	105,124	-5.2	-7.9
Johnson	19,962	18,858	-5.5	-8.2
Nemaha	32,415	30,810	-5.0	-7.3
Pawnee	11,341	10,041	-11.5	-14.0
Richardson	47,180	45,415	-3.7	-6.5
Region 8	153,718	149,013	-3.1	-5.8
Butler	31,026	28,197	-9.1	-11.7
Saline	59,604	58,433	-2.0	-4.8
Seward	63,088	62,383	-1.1	-3.9
Region 9	156,813	151,384	-3.5	-6.2
Fillmore	36,355	36,547	0.5	-2.4
Polk	24,661	24,719	0.2	-2.7
York	95,797	90,118	-5.9	-8.6
Region 10	278,644	269,567	-3.3	-6.0
Boone	33,865	33,298	-1.7	-4.5
Colfax	45,397	40,056	-11.8	-14.3
Nance	14,222	14,049	-1.2	-4.0
Platte	185,160	182,164	-1.6	-4.4
Region 11	336,742	333,168	-1.1	-3.9
Antelope	34,837	35,065	0.7	-2.2
Madison	220,012	219,164	-0.4	-3.3
Pierce	28,551	27,383	-4.1	-6.8
Stanton	11,365	11,393	0.2	-2.7
Wayne	41,977	40,163	-4.3	-7.0
Region 12	466,812	467,045	0.0	-2.8
Hall	374,448	378,383	1.1	-1.8
Hamilton	35,784	36,190	1.1	-1.8
Howard	23,254	22,432	-3.5	-6.3
Merrick	33,326	30,040	-9.9	-12.5
Region 13	271,100	268,823	-0.8	-3.7
Adams	183,054	185,130	1.1	-1.8
Clay	33,751	31,159	-7.7	-10.3
Nuckolls	37,006	35,457	-4.2	-6.9
Webster	17,289	17,077	-1.2	-4.0
Region 14	201,261	196,559	-2.3	-5.1
Gage	116,154	113,832	-2.0	-4.8
Jefferson	50,256	50,074	-0.4	-3.3
Thayer	34,851	32,653	-6.3	-9.0
Region 15	260,145	251,350	-3.4	-6.1
Buffalo	226,394	222,353	-1.8	-4.6
Kearney	33,751	28,997	-14.1	-16.6
Region 16	186,529	178,625	-4.2	-7.0
Dawson	135,012	130,104	-3.6	-6.4
Frontier	11,941	10,460	-12.4	-14.9
Furnas	29,613	29,429	-0.6	-3.4
Gosper	9,963	8,632	-13.4	-15.9
Region 17	110,083	99,883	-9.3	-11.9
Franklin	17,014	16,063	-5.6	-8.3
Harlan	18,013	17,218	-4.4	-7.1
Phelps	75,056	66,602	-11.3	-13.8
Region 18	213,240	212,317	-0.4	-3.3
Hooker	3,981	3,767	-5.4	-8.1
Lincoln	202,816	201,817	-0.5	-3.3
Logan	1,947	2,077	6.7	3.6
McPherson	625	625	0.0	-2.9
Thomas	3,871	4,031	4.1	1.1
Region 19	122,633	116,261	-5.2	-7.9
Arthur	1,325	1,135	-14.3	-16.8
Chase	31,111	29,096	-6.5	-9.2
Grant	3,680	3,645	-1.0	-3.8
Keith	65,514	63,565	-3.0	-5.8
Perkins	21,003	18,820	-10.4	-13.0
Region 20	128,680	121,279	-5.8	-8.5
Dundy	12,802	11,979	-6.4	-9.1
Hayes	2,073	2,200	6.1	3.1
Hitchcock	13,046	11,904	-8.8	-11.4
Red Willow	100,759	95,196	-5.5	-8.2
Region 21	103,032	96,879	-6.0	-8.7
Cheyenne	53,415	52,279	-2.1	-4.9
Deuel	11,504	11,163	-3.0	-5.8
Kimball	38,113	33,437	-12.3	-14.8
Region 22	270,118	263,182	-2.6	-5.4
Banner	1,319	1,438	9.0	5.9
Garden	9,724	9,834	1.1	-1.8
Morrill	30,373	27,769	-8.6	-11.2
Scotts Bluff	228,702	224,141	-2.0	-4.8
Region 23	167,198	164,975	-1.3	-4.2
Box Butte	75,723	76,586	1.1	-1.8
Dawes	44,860	44,013	-1.9	-4.7
Sheridan	43,184	40,916	-5.3	-8.0
Sioux	3,431	3,460	0.8	-2.1
Region 24	160,895	147,933	-8.1	-10.7
Boyd	9,457	9,334	-1.3	-4.1
Brown	25,527	22,679	-11.2	-13.7
Cherry	35,414	35,057	-1.0	-3.8
Holt	74,186	69,349	-6.5	-9.2
Keya Paha	2,422	2,441	0.8	-2.1
Rock	13,889	9,073	-34.7	-36.6
Region 25	102,826	94,361	-8.2	-10.9
Cedar	43,501	39,985	-8.1	-10.7
Dixon	16,685	15,006	-10.1	-12.7
Knox	42,640	39,370	-7.7	-10.3
Region 26	134,366	129,866	-3.3	-6.1
Blaine	2,101	1,704	-18.9	-21.2
Custer	64,475	62,473	-3.1	-5.9
Garfield	11,209	11,840	5.6	2.6
Greeley	11,523	10,890	-5.5	-8.2
Loup	1,414	1,551	9.7	6.6
Sherman	11,456	11,547	0.8	-2.1
Valley	29,846	27,717	-7.1	-9.8
Wheeler	2,342	2,144	-8.5	-11.1
TOTAL STATE[3]	9,164,344	9,189,408	0.3	-2.6

[1]Motor vehicle sales are recorded as in counties in which the vehicles were first registered, regardless of point of sale.
[2]Current dollar sales adjusted (deflated) for price changes using commodity prices component of the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price Index.
[3]Total state sales include some sales that cannot be allocated to cities, counties, or regions.
Source: Compilations by Bureau of Business Research from special tabulations provided by Nebraska Tax Commissioner.

(continued from page 1)
occurred between 1982 and 1983, can be found in Table 2. Again, it should be noted that the 1983 sales data have *not* been adjusted to account for the elimination of food sales.

Of the twenty-five state planning regions, only four recorded dollar volume increases in 1983, with three of those growing faster than the state average. The gains in sales were in Region 1, +6.0 percent; Region 2, +5.5 percent; Region 3, +3.4 percent; and Region 12, up less than 0.1 percent. These regions are composed of the state's five metropolitan counties and those counties in the Grand Island area. On a price-adjusted basis, only Regions 1, 2, and 3 experienced increases.

Map 1 shows that seven regions recorded losses in net taxable sales greater than five percent. These regions were generally located along the state's northern and southern borders. The largest declines were in Region 17, −9.3 percent; Region 25, −8.2 percent; and Region 24, −8.1 percent.

During 1983, twenty-three of the state's ninety-three counties had net taxable sales above those in 1982; twenty of these grew faster than the state. These growing counties were dispersed throughout the state, and regions with positive changes in retail sales generally contained the growing counties. However, Map 2 also shows that several of the counties with increasing sales were located in regions which reported the greatest losses. Counties with the most rapid increases in sales were Loup, +9.7 percent; Banner +9.0 percent; Sarpy, +7.8 percent; Logan, +6.7 percent; Hayes, +6.1 percent; Douglas, +6.0 percent; Garfield, +5.6 percent; and Lancaster, +5.5 percent. It is interesting to note that this group encompasses both the state's most and least populous counties. When adjustments are made for increasing prices, Table 2 shows that only eleven Nebraska counties gained sales in 1983.

Although many more counties experienced losses in sales than increases, the statewide change in sales was slightly positive because of the increases in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy Counties, which together account for somewhat less than half of the state's sales.

Of the seventy counties which recorded losses in 1983, thirty-three had losses exceeding five percent, including thirteen that dropped by ten percent or more. The largest declines were Rock County, −34.7 percent; Blaine County, −18.9 percent; Arthur County, −14.3 percent; Kearney County, −14.1 percent; and Gosper County, −13.4 percent.

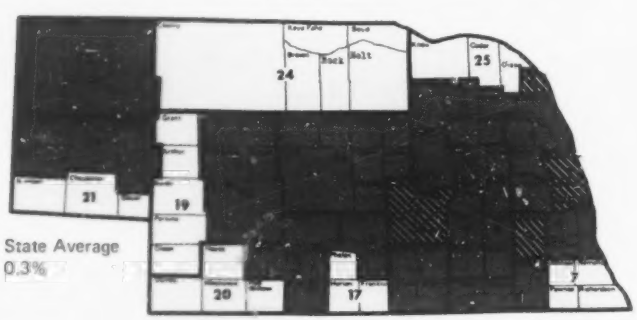
Data on 1982 and 1983 retail sales for thirty-two Nebraska communities can be found in Table 1. Note that the data in Table 1 exclude motor vehicle sales which are attributed to the county in which the vehicle is registered. Therefore, the state total in Table 1 is for non-vehicle sales and will differ from the state total in Table 2, which includes both motor vehicle and non-vehicle sales.

Statewide, the dollar amount of non-vehicle sales fell 1.5 percent in 1983, compared to a 3.5 percent decline in 1982. Again, it should be remembered the reason for 1983's decline is the narrowing of the sales tax base beginning in October 1983. As an aggregate, the thirty-two communities reported a 1.4 percent increase in net taxable sales between 1982 and 1983. This compares to a decline of 3.1 percent in the previous year.

Of the thirty-two cities listed in Table 1, only five did not report losses in the dollar volume of sales in 1983. These cities were Bellevue, +7.6 percent; Omaha, +4.4 percent; Lincoln, +4.1 percent; South Sioux City, +0.6 percent; and Hastings, unchanged. Of the remaining cities, nine reported losses in sales exceeding five percent. Those with the greatest losses were Kimball, −13.7 percent; Holdrege, −11.8 percent; Hartington, −9.1 percent; Seward, −8.1 percent; and Blair, −8.0 percent.

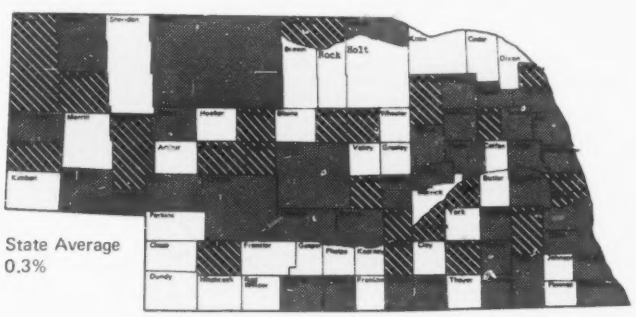
To summarize, it appears that Nebraska's net taxable retail sales were relatively flat during 1983, with little or no improvement over 1982. The growth that did occur happened primarily in the state's metropolitan counties. Of course, the elimination of the sales tax on food for home consumption in October makes 1983's figures lower than they otherwise would have been; even with adjustments, the sales performance was still mediocre. Looking to 1984, it appears that the state has been recovering from the most recent recession, and sales should improve. Because of the different tax bases in 1983 and 1984, however, it will again be very difficult to document the exact size of this improvement.

Map 1
Percentage Change In Net Taxable Retail Sales by Region
1982–1983



0.0% or greater
-0.1% to -5.0%
less than -5.0%

Map 2
Percentage Change In Net Taxable Retail Sales by County
1982–1983



0.0% or greater
-0.1% to -5.0%
less than -5.0%

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Review and Outlook

Output from the Nebraska economy increased 0.5 percent in March 1984 from the previous month. Nebraska's economy continues to improve, but remains below peak levels established in 1981.

Nebraska cash farm marketings totaled $427 million in March, down $15.2 million from a year ago. Agricultural prices received by Nebraska producers rose 2.7 percent February-March. Compared with a year ago, prices were up 5.6 percent. This increase, however, is not sufficient to prevent a larger than usual liquidation in the agriculture sector.

Improvement in the Nebraska economy this month was attributable to gains in the nonagriculture sector. This component of the Bureau of Business Research's index grew 0.7 percent on a month-to-month basis.

Construction lead all sectors with an 18.1 percent jump. This is the highest reading for the construction component of the index since 1981. The index in March of 1984 was 93.4 (1967 = 100), compared with a year previous reading of 58.3. It is doubtful this increase can be sustained because of the rise in interest rates.

Nebraska's manufacturing sector continues to recover from the recession. The manufacturing component of the index was up 7.5 percent February-March, the strongest month-to-month increase

(continued on page 5)

Notes for Tables 1 and 2: (1) The "distributive" indicator represents a composite of wholesale and retail trade; transportation, communication and utilities; finance, insurance, and real estate; and selected services. (2) The "physical volume" indicator and its components represent the dollar volume indicator and its components adjusted for price changes using appropriate price indexes—see Table 5, page 5.

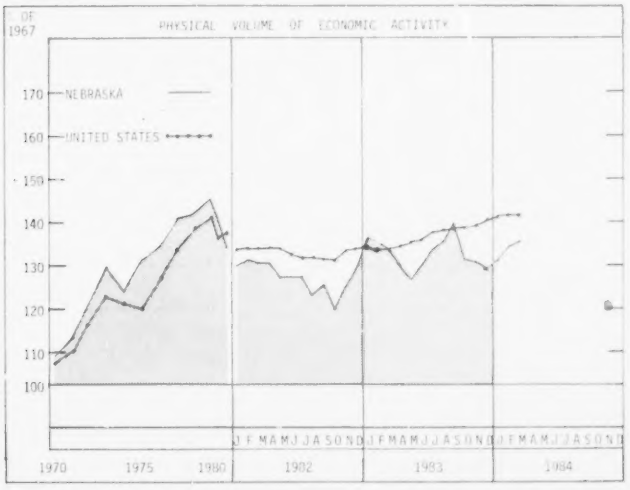
ECONOMIC INDICATORS: NEBRASKA AND UNITED STATES

1. CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR

March 1984	Current Month as Percent of Same Month Previous Year		1984 Year to Date as Percent of 1983 Year to Date	
Indicator	Nebraska	U.S.	Nebraska	U.S.
Dollar Volume	106.7	110.3	104.2	110.1
Agricultural	82.0	102.1	66.1	89.4
Nonagricultural	110.4	110.6	111.0	110.7
Construction	165.5	122.2	146.7	117.8
Manufacturing	118.8	115.5	117.8	114.5
Distributive	105.3	108.9	107.2	109.8
Government	113.2	106.3	113.4	106.3
Physical Volume	101.4	105.6	98.8	105.6
Agricultural	77.6	94.7	61.9	81.3
Nonagricultural	105.4	106.0	106.3	106.4
Construction	160.2	118.3	143.0	114.9
Manufacturing	114.8	111.9	114.4	111.6
Distributive	100.5	104.0	102.7	105.2
Government	104.6	100.3	104.7	100.0

2. CHANGE FROM 1967

	Percent of 1967 Average	
Indicator	Nebraska	U.S.
Dollar Volume	390.0	411.2
Agricultural	298.5	339.9
Nonagricultural	403.6	413.5
Construction	320.3	393.6
Manufacturing	384.3	322.4
Distributive	420.2	465.1
Government	412.0	417.5
Physical Volume	135.4	141.4
Agricultural	113.5	128.8
Nonagricultural	138.7	141.8
Construction	93.4	114.8
Manufacturing	153.9	127.1
Distributive	136.7	151.4
Government	150.7	146.6

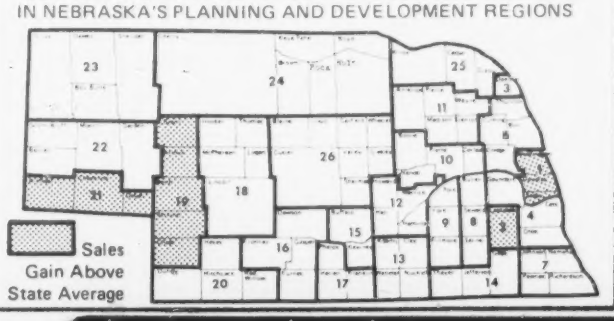


3. NET TAXABLE RETAIL SALES OF NEBRASKA REGIONS AND CITIES

Region Number and City	City Sales*	Sales in Region*	
	March 1984 as percent of March 1983	March 1984 as percent of March 1983	1984 to Date as percent of 1983 to Date
The State	99.2	98.7	105.9
1 Omaha	102.2	102.3	109.8
Bellevue	114.3		
Blair	101.6		
2 Lincoln	106.6	106.9	110.6
3 So. Sioux City	94.7	87.6	100.5
4 Nebraska City	94.5	95.6	99.6
6 Fremont	90.2	87.5	99.3
West Point	79.0		
7 Falls City	82.7	88.1	96.0
8 Seward	100.7	95.8	103.5
9 York	99.5	92.0	99.6
10 Columbus	88.3	86.0	95.7
11 Norfolk	93.0	90.8	93.5
Wayne	107.7		
12 Grand Island	96.4	95.3	100.7
13 Hastings	84.1	86.0	98.3
14 Beatrice	91.9	90.2	96.8
Fairbury	86.1		
15 Kearney	96.8	94.5	104.2
16 Lexington	91.3	89.5	96.0
17 Holdrege	86.6	83.3	94.3
18 North Platte	92.0	93.9	100.4
19 Ogallala	102.3	105.3	104.6
20 McCook	90.1	90.8	100.4
21 Sidney	95.0	97.4	104.8
Kimball	101.8		
22 Scottsbluff/Gering	98.1	98.7	101.1
23 Alliance	88.0	91.3	97.9
Chadron	90.1		
24 O'Neill	97.2	87.5	95.2
25 Hartington	96.1	88.2	91.9
26 Broken Bow	81.5	84.6	92.0

State totals include sales not allocated to cities or regions. The year-to-year ratios for city and region sales may be misleading because of changes in the portion of unallocated sales. Region totals include, and city totals exclude, motor vehicle sales. Sales are those on which sales taxes are collected by retailers located in the state. Compiled from data provided by Nebraska Department of Revenue.

1984 YEAR TO DATE AS PERCENT OF 1983 YEAR TO DATE IN NEBRASKA'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REGIONS



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in some time. The index is at a higher point than it has been since 1981, but remains below peak levels. Output in this sector peaked in February 1980 when the index hit an all time high of 175.5.

The distributive trade sector recorded a 2.0 percent decline on a month-to-month basis. The March 1984 distributive trade component of the index stood at 136.7, compared with 136.0 one year ago.

Nebraska retail sales dropped 1.3 percent in March 1983 compared with one year ago. Total retail sales were $688 million, compared with $697 million one year ago. Nonmotor vehicle sales were down 0.8 percent on a year-to-year basis, while motor vehicle sales decreased 3.7 percent.

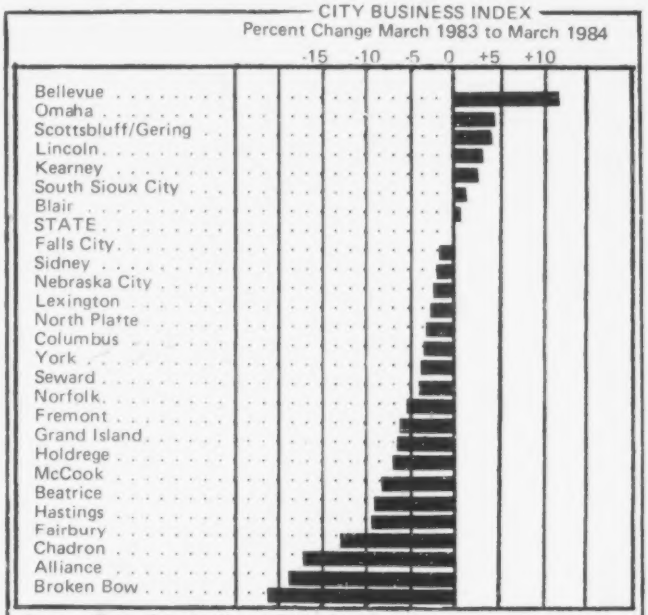
When retail sales are adjusted for price changes, total retail sales fell 6.5 percent from one year ago. Nonmotor vehicle sales were down 5.1 percent and vehicle sales dipped 14.8 percent. Nonmotor vehicle sales were adjusted by the commodity component of the Consumer Price Index, which has increased 4.5 percent March 1983–March 1984. Motor vehicle sales are adjusted by an index which measures changes in prices of new and used automobiles. This index increased 13.1 percent on a year-to-year basis.

Impressive gains once again were recorded by communities in the metropolitan Omaha area, as the area economy has recovered more quickly from this economic downturn than from the 1973–1975 recession. Bellevue led all Nebraska communities with an 11.4 percent gain, while Omaha was second with a 3.9 percent growth in its city business index. Scottsbluff/Gering recorded a 3.4 percent improvement, Lincoln a 2.9 percent growth, and Kearney a 2.1 percent increase.

The state's economy is expected to continue to expand over the coming twelve months. Personal income will rise and more people will be employed. Nebraska is benefiting from the growth in the national economy, although higher interest rates are having a depressing impact upon all sectors of the state's economy, including the agriculture and small business sectors.

Rumors of Russian grain crop difficulties have led to optimism that U.S. grain exports will rise. It is unlikely that anything less than a major crop shortfall would have a significant effect upon the state's economy. World grain stocks are large, which make substantial increases in grain prices unlikely without a major crop disaster.

D.E.P.



Source: Table 3 (page 4) and Table 4 below.

4. March 1984 — CITY BUSINESS INDICATORS

The State and Its Trading Centers	Percent of Same Month a Year Ago: Employment[1]	Building Activity[2]	Power Consumption[3]
The State	101.2	143.3	116.8
Alliance	97.7	11.0	117.6
Beatrice	101.8	39.6	113.8
Bellevue	103.4	324.0	122.9
Blair	96.9	194.9	111.4
Broken Bow	88.8	26.1	141.9
Chadron	99.9	12.2	135.4
Columbus	109.0	84.6	120.4
Fairbury	100.8	27.4	119.0
Falls City	102.0	363.6	106.6
Fremont	99.8	102.3	119.2*
Grand Island	100.6	52.5	112.4
Hastings	100.0	88.8	111.7
Holdrege	95.1	194.0	139.6
Kearney	101.7	256.5	109.6
Lexington	102.9	130.8	110.4
Lincoln	102.1	123.8	124.9
McCook	92.0	130.6	117.5
Nebraska City	102.8	102.3	117.5
Norfolk	100.4	93.2	105.6
North Platte	102.3	120.0	106.9
Omaha	103.4	202.6	117.8
Scottsbluff/Gering	101.6	304.8	130.2
Seward	97.8	71.8	116.1
Sidney	100.6	126.7	125.3
So. Sioux City	100.6	279.9	107.5
York	96.0	94.5	110.7

[1] As a proxy for city employment, total employment for the county in which a city is located is used.

[2] Building Activity is the value of building permits issued as spread over an appropriate time period of construction. The U.S. Department of Commerce Composite Construction Cost Index is used to adjust construction activity for price changes.

[3] Power Consumption is a combined index of consumption of electricity and natural gas except in cases marked * for which only one is used.

Source: Compilation by Bureau of Business Research from reports of private and public agencies.

5. PRICE INDEXES

March 1984	Index (1967 = 100)	Percent of Same Month Last Year	Year to Date as Percent of Same Period Last Year*
Consumer Prices	307.3	104.7	104.4
Commodity component	278.7	104.5	104.1
Wholesale Prices	311.1	103.5	103.0
Agricultural Prices			
United States	264.0	107.8	109.8
Nebraska	263.0	105.6	106.6

*Using arithmetic average of monthly indexes.

Sources: Consumer and Wholesale Prices: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Agricultural Prices: U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Because general sales tax for Nebraska became effective June 1, 1967, 1968 was the first full year for which net taxable retail sales were available. Sales totaled $2,918 in 1968. Compared to 1983's figure of $9,189 million, sales rose 215 percent. This fifteen year increase represents an average annual growth rate of 7.9 percent.

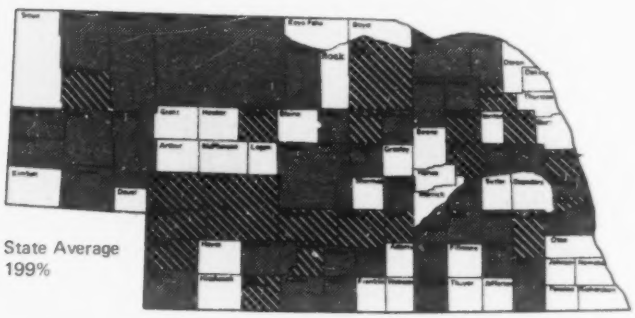
Much of the growth in sales reflects inflation over the period. The best available index to adjust the retail sales data is the commodity component of the Consumer Price Index. Between 1968 and 1983, this index grew 162 percent, indicating a real growth in retail sales of approximately 20 percent. Since 1968, therefore, real retail sales in Nebraska have increased at an average annual rate of 1.2 percent.

Map 3 at the bottom of the page presents the 1968–1983 growth rates for Nebraska counties. In all, twenty counties grew at rates of 200 percent or more. The map shows that these counties were dispersed throughout the state, with some concentrations of counties in northeastern Nebraska and along the Platte River in central and southwestern Nebraska. The ten fastest growing counties were Sarpy, 326 percent; Buffalo, 278 percent; Box Butte, 270 percent; Hall, 258 percent; Chase, 246 percent; Lancaster, 242 percent; Madison, 239 percent; Gosper, 232 percent; Platte, 232 percent; and Lincoln, 219 percent. With the exception of Chase and Gosper Counties, the remaining counties had a major trading center and were among the state's leaders in the dollar volume of sales.

Map 3 also shows the counties that did not fare as well between 1968 and 1983. Of the seventy-three counties with sales growth less than 200 percent, thirty-seven had increases in sales of less than 150 percent. (These counties most likely had no growth or decline in real sales.) The ten slowest growing counties were Thurston, 77 percent; Greely, 82 percent; Sherman, 99 percent; Pawnee, 101 percent; Dixon, 103 percent; Boyd, 103 percent; Keya Paha, 103 percent; Logan, 108 percent; McPherson, 108 percent; and Rock, 111 percent.

J.A.D.

Map 3
Percentage Growth by County 1968–1983



State Average
199%

200% or greater
150% to 199%
less than 150%

DATA AVAILABILITY

Net taxable retail sales data are available annually for 1968–1983 for purchase from the Bureau of Business Research. Included are motor vehicle, nonmotor vehicle, and total sales for counties; and nonmotor vehicle sales for selected cities. Copies of these data are available for $25.00 from the Bureau of Business Research, 200 CBA, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0406. Make checks payable to the Bureau of Business Research.

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